

one of the fastest growing crimes in the country.

PRESIDENT CLINTON PUTS POLITICS OVER PEOPLE ON FLOOD RELIEF LEGISLATION

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, yesterday President Clinton sent a callous message to the flood-ravaged American families in the Midwest. Only minutes after receiving the disaster relief bill from Capitol Hill, the President who likes to say that he feels our pain told thousands of flood victims that he was going to veto the bill that would help them rebuild their homes and get on with their lives.

Why did President Clinton veto the legislation? Because the bill contained a provision that would stop him from forcing another Government shutdown. Let me repeat that. The President is withholding aid to thousands of flood victims so that he can reserve the right to once again put thousands and thousands of government employees out of work and bring the work of the Federal Government to a halt.

Despite the fact that the President is a master at spin, Mr. Speaker, I do not think he is going to be able to spin this one much. The American people are going to see through this. It is politics at its worst. Let us get the disaster relief to the people who truly need it.

THE ECONOMY

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, if this economy is so great, why are American workers losing their jobs? If this economy is so great, why are American workers going bankrupt in record numbers? If that is not enough to massage your Dow Jones, check this out: If this economy is so great, why do many families need three jobs just to pay their bills?

Let us tell it like it is: When you hold this economy to your nose, this economy does not smell so rosy. If there is any consolation to the American workers, I never heard of anyone in America committing suicide by jumping out of a basement window.

I yield back all the propaganda on this great economy.

UNDER THE HEADING: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, since I spoke about Haiti at morning business early today, I have seen still more evidence to suggest that there is a de facto

strong man regime being run in Haiti by former President Aristide, one that functions contrary to and does damage to the embryonic democratic process the United States is supporting there with so many United States tax dollars and so much of our credibility.

International observers and Haitian political parties alike say that the April 6 elections were fraudulent. They were rigged in favor of Aristide, a man who today is sabotaging the economic reform process that is so desperately needed in Haiti, the poorest nation in this hemisphere. Worse still is the fact that all the candidates who are not of Aristide's Famille Lavalas Party are boycotting this Sunday's elections because they are based on a flawed process, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I ask, where are those colleagues today, those champions of Aristide who rallied at the White House to support him when he was President-in-exile? Will they be around to support democracy in Haiti, which is what this is about, rather than restoring a strong man?

IN FAVOR OF A CLEAN SPENDING BILL

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans must stop playing politics with the lives of the flood victims of North Dakota and Minnesota. Pass a bill that is disaster relief, plain and simple. Amendments that have nothing to do with disaster relief have no place in a bill designed to bring relief to people in dire need.

Mr. Speaker, I represent a district of hard-working people who live nearly 2,000 miles from the Dakotas, people who now must deal with the so-called immigrant and welfare reforms. My constituents are filled with compassion for those struggling to fulfill the American dream. Their hearts and minds go out to those in need in the Dakotas and Minnesota.

My constituents are outraged that the Republican Party would play politics with people so desperately in need. Shame on them. Pass a clean bill and leave the politics at home.

CONGRATULATING THE LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY MEN'S BASEBALL AND WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD TEAMS FOR WINNING NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

(Mr. MCCRERY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, across our Nation this past weekend millions of Americans took part in the weekly ritual of opening their Sunday morning newspaper. For many folks, they first turn to the sports page to get scores or reports on their favorite teams.

But this past Sunday Louisianans did not need to check the papers. In their

homes Saturday they had gathered with purple- and gold-clad friends to watch the LSU Tigers win the College World Series for the second consecutive year and for the fourth time in the 1990's. Along the way, LSU rewrote the record books, hitting more home runs than any other college team in history.

Meanwhile the LSU women's track and field team accomplished what many said could not be done, clinching an 11th consecutive national championship. The championship for the Lady Tigers continued the longest active streak of national championships by any men's or women's program in Division I sports.

If you opened the Sunday paper here in our Nation's Capital this last weekend, there was an entire page with stories about the two championships for LSU. Hard work by athletes and coaches on both LSU teams has produced collegiate sports dynasties and has instilled pride in the hearts of Tiger alumni across America. I join the citizens of Louisiana in saying congratulations and thank you to Coach Skip Bertman and his LSU men's baseball team and to Coach Pat Henry and the women's track and field team. Keep going, Tigers.

H.R. 1822, THE STATE INFRASTRUCTURE BANKS FOR SCHOOLS ACT OF 1997

(Mrs. TAUSCHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, last week I introduced House Resolution 1822, the State Infrastructure Banks for Schools Act, along with 31 Members from both parties. This is a cost-effective approach to help schools prepare our kids for the 21st century workplace.

We are all familiar with the estimated \$112 billion tax dollar price tag to improve school infrastructure. But we now know that a direct correlation exists between the condition of school facilities and the students' achievement. That is right, our kids' grades are affected by the condition of their schools. It is difficult to learn when the roof is leaking or blackouts occur if too many computers are turned on.

H.R. 1822 addresses these problems by funding State Infrastructure Banks, or SIBs, for school construction. These banks provide maximum flexibility in financing and minimal restrictions regarding project approval. As loans are repaid, banks could provide assistance to projects in other schools. Although this is an innovative approach, similar programs have been used for Clean Water Act infrastructure, making improvements more affordable and widely available.

Mr. Speaker, we need to educate our kids in a stable and supportive environment. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 1822.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1559

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name as a cosponsor from H.R. 1559.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

THE 1997 BUDGET

(Mr. BOB SCHAEFFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOB SCHAEFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, for 40 years Congress was in the hands of liberal Democrats who succeeded brilliantly in accomplishing two things. First, they made absolutely sure that, come rain or shine, Government would keep getting bigger and bigger year after year. Second, they made absolutely sure that, come rain or shine, Government would take more and more of your money year after year.

For the great middle class, playing by the rules and paying taxes, big government liberalism soon became the No. 1 obstacle standing in the way of their hopes and dreams. It is time for change. It is hard to save for your future when Government pursues policies that punish saving. It is hard to pass on the family farm or the family business to your children when the Government hits you with a death tax that the children are unable to pay.

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It is hard to believe in the American dream anymore when the Government leaves future generations a legacy of more debt and higher taxes.

Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, the 1997 budget finally puts an end to 40 years of expanding Government and endless taxation. This Congress should stand squarely behind the balanced budget.

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC OVER- WHELMINGLY OPPOSED TO MFN

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage all Members of this body to read the poll in today's Wall Street Journal.

By an overwhelming margin, 67 percent of Americans polled by NBC News and the Wall Street Journal said that the United States should demand improvements in China's human rights if China wants to continue its current trading status of MFN; 67 percent.

Among men, the percentage who favor human rights improvement before MFN was renewed was 63 percent. Among women, the percentage was a staggering 70 percent. And I say regarding my side, we are concerned about the gender gap. If we want to see

a gender gap, 70 percent of the American women favor linking trade and MFN.

No matter whether we break it down according to party affiliation, income, or age, the results are still the same: 60 to 70 percent favor demanding improvements in China's human rights record before renewing MFN. Republicans polled, 61 percent; Democrats, 73 percent. Of those earning \$50,000 or more, 63 percent favor human rights; 76 percent of those earning less than \$20,000 favored human rights improvements.

The American people want the Congress to send a message about human rights. They want to send a message about the Catholic priests, the Protestant pastors, the Buddhist monks, and the Muslims being persecuted. I urge this Congress to send a message to the Chinese people. Vote to deny MFN.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has been concluded on all motions to suspend the rules but not before 2 p.m. today.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR AUSABLE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT IN NEW YORK

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 848) to extend the deadline under the Federal Power Act applicable to the construction of the AuSable hydroelectric project in New York, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 848

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DEADLINE.

(a) PROJECT NUMBERED 10836.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 10836-000NY, the Commission shall, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project, under the extension described in subsection (b), for not more than 3 consecutive 2-year periods.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This subsection shall take effect on the date of the expiration of the extension of the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) that the Commission issued, prior to the date of enactment of

this Act, under section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806).

(c) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the license for the project referred to in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and extend the time required for commencement of construction of the project as provided in subsection (a) for not more than 3 consecutive 2-year periods, the first of which shall commence on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. DAN SCHAEFER] and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. HALL] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. DAN SCHAEFER].

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, under section 13 of the Federal Power Act, project construction must begin within 4 years of issuance of a license. If construction has not begun by that time, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission cannot extend the deadline and must terminate that license.

H.R. 848 and H.R. 1184 provide for extensions for the construction deadline if the sponsor pursues the commencement of construction in good faith and with due diligence. H.R. 1217 provides additional time to complete construction of a project.

These types of bills have not been controversial in the past. The bills do not change the license requirements in any way and do not change environmental standards but merely extend construction deadlines. There is a time in which we have to act, since construction deadlines for one project expired in February and the others expire in the coming months. If Congress does not act, the FERC will terminate the licenses, the project sponsors will lose millions of dollars that they have invested in these projects, and communities will lose the prospect of significant job creation and added revenues.

I should also note that the bills incorporate the views of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The Energy and Power Subcommittee solicited the views of FERC, and the agency does not oppose any of the three bills we have up today.

I would like to briefly describe the first of the bills, H.R. 848. It is a bill to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project in the State of New York. The AuSable project is very important to the village of Keeseville. The Prescott Mill hydropower project was the symbolic heart of the community and the major employee in Keeseville from 1832 until the 1960's. The demise of Prescott Mill in the 1960's caused economic hardship in the village that can be felt today.

Redevelopment of the project will provide a badly needed boost to an area